

VAMCHS Postgraduate Year One (PGY1)  
Pharmacy Residency Program  
*Learning Experience Descriptions*

VA



**Orientation:** Orientation is conducted at the VA Maryland Health Care System (VAMHCS) at the beginning of the residency program. During this experience, the resident will complete the VA requirements for New Employee Orientation (NEO). The resident will be oriented to the Pharmacy Department Operations throughout the Medical Center via direct observation and participation with the Pharmacy Staff. The resident will also orient at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy with activities including a new resident luncheon, introduction to Pharmacotherapy Rounds and an overview of the wide array of teaching opportunities and other elective activities offered through the school.

**Hospital Pharmacy:** The Hospital Pharmacy experience teaches practical aspects of drug distribution and pharmaceutical care in a hospital setting. This learning experience will build upon the skills learned during orientation to ensure the resident understands the VAMHCS' medication-use process and understands all the services this department provides and supports. This Hospital Pharmacy Rotation includes the *longitudinal monthly staffing requirement*.

**Internal Medicine:** The goal of this learning experience is to expose the resident to an independent patient care experience and a wide variety of disease states. The resident will work closely with an internal medicine team and other interdisciplinary team members to provide quality pharmaceutical care to hospitalized veterans. The daily activities include rounding with the medical team, presenting patients to the preceptor, making medication interventions, providing discharge medication counseling, and documenting patient care activities in the medical chart. Medication reconciliation will also play a predominant role. The resident may also make informal presentations to the medical team, pharmacy department and/or nursing staff.

**Cardiology:** The goals and objectives of the Cardiology learning experience are to further the resident's skills in patient monitoring, interaction with healthcare professionals, and patient counseling; and providing an in-depth knowledge base regarding common cardiology problems including coronary artery disease, heart failure, and arrhythmias. The resident will attend rounds and monitor patients admitted to the Cardiology service daily. Primary duties include interacting with medical and nursing staff to answer questions regarding medications and assist in medication selection/dosing to optimize the use of medications. The resident may also prepare and present in-services on medications and/or medical therapy for the cardiology staff.

**Critical Care:** The Critical Care learning experience is offered in either the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) or the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU). The goal of this rotation is to expose the resident to various topics in Critical Care Medicine and apply this knowledge to the veteran population. Daily activities include rounding with the critical care team, reviewing patients with the preceptor, and providing timely responses to drug information questions. In addition, the resident will become familiar with VA restriction criteria for medications, identify and report medication errors and adverse drug reactions. The resident will participate in the medication reconciliation process and provide a presentation to the critical care team.

**Ambulatory Care:** The goal of the ambulatory care experience is for the resident to develop their skills in pharmacotherapy and management of chronic disease states. This will be accomplished in collaboration with providers in primary care and pharmacy-based clinics. The PGY1 Ambulatory Care experience will **focus** predominately on chronic disease state management. Residents may also be exposed to a wide variety of VAMHCS Ambulatory Care Clinics through elective experiences and observation including Anticoagulation. This learning experience will include both block and longitudinal learning experiences.

**Practice management:** During several practice management experiences the resident will be exposed to various areas of pharmacy administration and management. The resident may participate in various activities including Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee, adverse drug event and medication error reporting (**Medication Safety**), drug use evaluations (DUEs), quality improvement and safety programs, cost initiative programs, and non-formulary drug assessments. Other areas of responsibility may include policy and procedure updates, review of pharmacy budgetary activities, and conducting and leading pharmacy staff meetings.

**Psychiatry:** The psychiatry learning experience is designed to give the resident a basic understanding of the pharmacotherapy and management of acute and chronic psychiatric disorders. The resident will work in collaboration with the health care team (psychiatrists, physician's assistants, nurses, and social workers) to optimize medication use on the inpatient psychiatry units throughout the VAMHCS. The resident will become skilled in assessing appropriateness of drug therapy, application of pharmacokinetic principles, drug monitoring, and provision of drug information. Daily activities will focus on performing medication reconciliation, collecting medication histories, and providing patient education and discharge counseling.

**Infectious Diseases/Antimicrobial Stewardship:** The inpatient ID consult service assists the acute medical, intensive care (ICU), and community living center (CLC) teams with the management of various infectious syndromes. The ASP team (consisting of the infectious disease pharmacist and attending) monitors and evaluates antimicrobial use throughout the facility, including the CLC, and works in tandem with the ID consult service to ensure appropriate antimicrobial use. The resident will gain experience working with both teams. Emphasis in this learning experience is placed on the pharmacotherapy of various infectious disease states and providing evidence-based, patient-centered medication therapy management.

**Performance Improvement/Research:** Each resident is required to conduct a performance improvement/research project during the PGY1 residency year. The topic must be approved by both the RPD and the Residency Advisory Committee. Assistance with navigating the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and VA R&D procedures is provided throughout the process. Residents are required to present at the Eastern States Conference (ESC) for Residents and Preceptors. Residents must then prepare a manuscript of their project in publishable format as part of the requirements for successful completion of their residency.

**Geriatrics:** This experience encompasses exposure to several long-term care (LTC) units within the VAMHCS including nursing home units, sub-acute rehab units and hospice units. Residents will work with several geriatric pharmacists to provide safe and effective pharmaceutical care to this unique and challenging population. Activities may include inpatient and/or outpatient hospice care, monthly chart-reviews, home-based primary care team, and management of anticoagulation in the nursing home patient.

**Home Based Primary Care (HBPC):** This is an elective, longitudinal, ambulatory care clinic rotation. The HBPC program is part of ambulatory care services that serves generally geriatric patients who are homebound and thus unable to receive care in the VA primary care clinics. This program provides comprehensive primary care of the patient's chronic disease states. Because the goal is patient-centered care, each patient has an interdisciplinary team consisting of a clinical pharmacy specialist, nurse practitioner, registered nurses, social worker, psychologist, kinesiologist, dietician and administrative support staff that looks after them. Clinical Pharmacy Specialists participate on the team by assessing patient's overall medication management on home visits, telephone visits, and chart reviews, and by making therapy recommendations to providers.

**Academic Detailing:** The Academic Detailer is responsible for providing evidence-based medicine to staff on national and VISN 5 initiatives. Academic Detailing involves reviewing literature, developing and/or promoting educational pieces for staff or patients, providing Academic Detailing outreach visits to VA staff, presenting in-services, identifying and resolving barriers to initiatives. This rotation introduces the PGY1 pharmacy resident to the skills and techniques of Academic Detailing and gain experience applying these practices in various settings. The resident will participate in both outreach visits with VA staff and In-service presentations. This rotation allows for perspective of the entire healthcare system orchestration and how pharmacy service may be aligned to improve outcomes on various focuses or initiatives. Activities will take place at both the VA Maryland Health Care System and VISN 5 Office.

*This program participates in the ASHP Residency Matching Program through the National Matching Service. The residency site agrees that no person at this site will solicit, accept, or use any ranking-related information from the residency applicant. This program is currently under ASHP Candidate Status.*